

Connecticut Campaign to End Childhood Hunger Action Plan

We all know that children who are hungry are unable to learn or play well and behaviors are compromised. Additionally, children who have an inadequate diet suffer from health problems including being overweight and obesity which may lead to much deadlier consequences through diabetes, heart problems and cancer.

End Hunger Connecticut! asks you to join us in the Connecticut Campaign to End Childhood Hunger. This is a three year multi-pronged plan that assesses the current use of the federal food programs *and* creates an effective roadmap to increase the reach of those programs, not only putting food on the table for our children but also putting additional federal money in the bank for Connecticut.

Strategies

Action Steps

<p>1. Connecticut's children will have nutritious school breakfasts at the beginning of each school day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of towns and schools that participate in the School Breakfast Program and increase the number of students eating breakfast in participating schools. • Advocate for state funding to increase per meal reimbursements, grants and start-up/expansion grants.
<p>2. Connecticut families will have the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address gaps in services for adult/family food and nutrition education programming in Connecticut and increase awareness of the programs. • Increase awareness of nutritional value and quality of foods in schools, restaurants, grocery stores and other areas where food is readily available to families.
<p>3. Seventy-five percent of eligible individuals in Connecticut will participate in the Food Stamp program and receive benefits sufficient to meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue innovative outreach while creating partnerships with other non-profits and the Department of Social Services to break down barriers and increase food stamp participation rates. • Advocate at the legislative and administrative level to implement effective food stamp policy initiatives.
<p>4. All Connecticut residents will have access to fresh, nutritious, affordable food in their neighborhoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local efforts to site supermarkets in urban areas and alternatives that ensure access to healthier foods in urban areas. • Support federal, state and local programs that teach about, make available, and sustain the production of fresh local produce.
<p>5. Fifty percent of Connecticut providers of child and elderly care programs, who serve families in need, will participate in the federal food programs for after-school snacks and meals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct outreach to enroll and expand both licensed and license-exempt child care programs participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. • Conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to community organizations and providers to make after-school snacks to children available in ongoing and new programs while increasing participation in the programs.



<p>6. Fifty-two percent of eligible children will participate in Summer Nutrition programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with communities to increase participation through outreach, increasing program duration, and supporting sponsors to improve meal quality and offer activities at Summer Food Service sites. • Advocate for state funding for outreach, implementation and to increase participation in the Summer Food Service Program.
<p>7. Eighty percent of eligible pregnant women and children in Connecticut will participate in the WIC program and have culturally appropriate, nutritious food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address gaps in services and program accessibility of the WIC Program and implement a plan to raise WIC awareness in local communities. • Advocate for state funding for outreach and local WIC administration. Work with the Connecticut WIC Advisory Board to increase communication between WIC participants, local administrators and the Department of Public Health.
<p>8. Low-income families in Connecticut will have access to nutritious food provided in dignified ways in local food pantries and other charitable programs, when such assistance is needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize the quality and quantity of food coming to Connecticut through federal and state sources. Increase state funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and federal funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program, in order to provide ongoing and sustained high-quality food to the state's food banks, including state funding to develop capacity building grants for local food sites to receive and distribute perishable foods. • Educate the public about the most effective ways to provide immediate assistance to people in need – specifically about the work the food banks are doing with fresh fruits and vegetables and the “Meat the Need” program. Help people understand more efficient and effective methods than food drives to help serve hungry people. • Support local food sites to distribute food with dignity, to ensure that children have nutritious food to eat when school is not in session and to partner with programs that promote ending hunger in Connecticut.
<p>9. All eligible Connecticut families will receive information about food and nutrition programs available to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and promote innovative tactics and multi-lingual outreach materials to encourage access to and acceptance of food and nutrition programs available in Connecticut. • Distribute this information with all food stamp applications, to all clients who come to food pantries and other food programs. Prisoners scheduled for release would also receive this information.
<p>10. Low-income families in Connecticut will achieve greater economic security.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass a state-wide Earned Income Tax Credit. • Partner with state and local community groups to increase access to Volunteer Income Tax Assistance programs.

